The Owasippe Solution

A suggested plan for the Future of Owasippe

Tonight's Agenda

- What can we answer/What we can't answer!
- Come up to speed
- Presentation to Executive Board
- What do we do next
  - Letters to the Board (not email)
  - We live by the Scout Oath and Law
- What not to do
- Q&A/Discussion

What Can we Answer?

- We know what we have done
- We know who has participated to date
- We don’t know what has happened to what funds other than those described tonight
- We can’t speculate on the thought processes
- We can’t question the integrity of specific individuals – unless we want them to do the same.

2002 Summer Camp Attendance

District	# of units	# of Youth	# of Adults
Fort Dearborn	15/80%	128/42%	53
Iroquois	14/92%	177/65%	81
Grtr Southside	17/43%	129/24%	45
Indian Trails	28/62%	482/64%	151
River Trails	8/38%	101/50%	38
Arrowhead	38/90%	534/62%	187
Western Trails	3/19%	12/7%	9
Champions	1/100%	15/88%	3
Chicago Area	124 (+1)/62%	1578 (+11)/53%	567
Other Councils	66 (-30)	1237 (-533)	375
TOTAL	190 (-30)	2815 (-522)	942 (-175)

Trust Funds as of 12/31

Trust Funds of the Chicago Area Council
31-Dec-01

	Name	Balance
*	Watzek	$1,136,435.82
*	Permanent	$73,686.61
*	Hoover	$1,987,672.99
*	1980 Captial Campaign (Camperships)	$961,168.32
	OSR '81 Land Sale (Camperships)	$262,883.70
	OSR '81 Land Sale (Maintenance)	$354,241.27
*	Hoover Foundation	$659,094.93
*	Schiff Foundation	$156,161.20
*	Vehon	$958,430.58
*	Nunn - OSR	$73,477.84
	Bequests	$401,433.07
*	Fossett - OSR	$38,220.77
*	Nickles	$18,379.97
	Sea Exploring	$81,442.36
*	Burket	$189,321.66
	OSR '94 Land Sale (Operations)	$64,567.92
*	Gray - OSR	$30,900.00
	Total	$7,447,519.01

* Donor Restricted Funds/all other funds board designated

Since May ---

- We have met with responsible leaders of the business community in West Michigan Shores
- We have discovered a tremendous untapped resource in our neighbors in Muskegon County.
- We knew the Executive Committee was busy and not sharing their efforts.
- I met with a small group on September 11.
- I attended a conference call on September 26 and then an Executive Board meeting on that afternoon.
- Pulled together SOSR that night.

The SOSR Committee

- Rich Gudmundson
- John Chikow
- Bill Egan
- Rita Egan
- Ron Kulak
- Ron Derby
- Susan Bisset
- Gordy Stiefel
- Bob Kurth
- Andy Witt
- Mike Finnegan
- Frank Chlebek
- Jim Schlichting
- Don Studaven
- Jim Nothnagel
- Ron Humbert
- Mike Wahl

Agenda

- Goal Statement
- Current State
- Population Issues
- Additional Youth from Chicago
- Muskegon County, Owasippe's Business Partner
- Community Contacts
- Off Season Use Opportunities
- Missed Opportunities
- Solution Possibilities
- Recommendation
- What We Want

Goal:

- **Our goal is to eliminate the financial burden of Owasippe from the Chicago Area Council**

Current State

- Owasippe Scout Reservation is:
  - An Outdoor Education Center with the potential for full service conference facilities
  - A treasure trove of nature with an estimated 1000 species of flora and wildlife identified including 19 rare, threatened, or endangered species.
  - The focal point for the Council's summer camping program
  - A youth and youth leader program training and education center.
  - Under utilized as a result of a number of strategic causes:
    - Reduction in the number of Scouts attending from Chicago Area Council as well as Out-of-Council units
    - Strategic decision made by council leadership to not make use of the camp during the off season

Current State (cont.)

- Owasippe Scout Reservation offers:
  - 90+ years of relationship between Chicago and the West Michigan communities on 4,800 acres that provides an unsurpassed experience for youth
  - Facilities for recreation, educational programs and services based on identified needs which reflect the values of the Boy Scouts of America and our natural resources.
  - It also serves as a facility to host many other groups.

Current State (cont.)

- Owasippe has:
  - Approximately $200,000 annual shortfall from operations
  - Significant but not insurmountable infrastructure issues:
    - Current electrical wiring needs to be replaced – wire donated by Huen Electric several years ago and still held on the Camp
    - Phone System needs upgrading – new $77,000 switch donated through good auspices of Tellabs and Siemens Telecom. Wireless alternatives being investigated by Curt Andrich of Booz, Allen, Hamilton.
    - Water system in good shape but back up generated needed for central water
    - LP gas system needs to be reviewed by competent party.

Population Issues

- When we look at the population of youth we serve and the number of Scouts in Chicago who do not come to camp we believe there are two main reasons why the units don't come to Owasippe:
  - The main reason is a function of single leader units and single parent families
  - Our leadership and operations mis-management of the camp has driven many units away from Owasippe
  - It is NOT a function of money (the current campership funds exist to remove that issue)
  - It is NOT a function of distance!

Additional Youth

- We believe that we can increase the number of youth coming to camp by creative use of provisional units.
- We have two volunteers ready to move to change the camping format in these “at risk” units to get them organized to come to camp.
- We need to act NOW not in May.

Owasippe's Business Partner

- Muskegon County has ranked in the top 30 out of 315 metropolitan communities in *Industry Week's* World Class Community annual survey for five consecutive years.
- The Muskegon-Grand Rapids-Holland MSA ranked 3rd nationally for new and expanded business facilities according to the 2000 survey conducted by *Site Selection* magazine, for their annual Governor.s Cup Contest.
- In the past 10 years West Michigan.s population has grown from a 1991 estimate of 955,165 individuals to a 2001 estimate of 1,099,841.a 15.1% increase compared to a 6.4% increase for Michigan and a 12.6% increase for the U.S.

Owasippe's Business Partner

- Total wage and salary employment by place of work mushroomed 35.2% during the past 10 years, from 445,800 employees in 1991 to 602,500 in 2001. This compares to a 20.1% increase for Michigan and a 22.1% increase for the U.S.
- While manufacturing employment is shrinking elsewhere, West Michigan experienced a 21.0% growth from 1991 to 2001 compared to a 4.7% increase for Michigan and a 3.8% decrease for the U.S.

Community Contacts

- Since June 1, in an effort to determine the receptiveness of the local community, I spoke with a number of people interested in helping make Owasippe a viable member of the community:
  - Andy Lofgren — Director, Economic Development, Muskegon County
  - Jerry Van Woerkom — Michigan State Representative (Senator Elect)
  - John VanWyck — Chair, Muskegon County Planning Commission
  - Nancy Fry — Muskegon County Commissioner (Representative Elect)
West Michigan Girls Scouts Board President
  - Sam Wendling — Muskegon County Staff
  - Tim Michalski — Assistant to the Muskegon County Administrator
  - Mary McDonald — Community Foundation for Muskegon County
  - Dave Schultz — Licensed Professional Engineer (Civil)
  - Dr. Janet Vail — Grand Valley State University
  - Norm Ullman — Mayor of Whitehall
  - Don Studaven — Blue Lake Township Supervisor

Off Season Use Opportunities

- Lease a portion of Owasippe to Muskegon County for a low risk adjudicated youth facility at Bass Lake.
- Lease of Camp Robert Crown to the West Michigan Girls Scouts
- Lease of additional camping space to the Latter Day Saints Scouts
- Conduct “shoulder season” specialty camps for the school systems in the county (foot ball camps, etc)
- Develop Reneker Family Camp into a multi-season use facility for use by executive teams as well as youth organizations.

Missed Opportunities

- Here is a sample of opportunities that have come our way recently but have not been capitalized upon by our professional staff:
  - $150,000 of annual lease for the Latter Day Saints Scouts (they are still interested in a Wood Badge course today.)
  - West Michigan Shores football conference annual football camp (recent email) for 300 youth for a 10 day camp. Camp Miniwanka, 20 minutes north of us, charged $300 per participant for this camp.
  - Community Foundation for Muskegon County

Solutions Possibilities

- There are a number of possible solutions to our financial dilemma:
  - Sell Hoover and Owasippe and consolidate the camping activities into a near in camp within 2 hours of Chicago.
  - Sell Hoover, retire the council's debt and fund a permanent endowment of Owasippe
  - Fund a permanent endowment of Owasippe through outside fund raising.
  - Generate sufficient funds through additional in-season revenue and off-season usage

Recommendation

- Selling Owasippe and Hoover will not address the fundamental problem of leadership's inability to run a camping program for the Scouting Youth of Chicago.
- We recommend the generation of an endowment through a number of means:
  - Sale of Hoover,
  - Solicitation of funds from donors in Chicago utilizing the volunteers. Either we can find the support or we can't but we don't believe the council has done a complete job.
    - Steven Fossett, Stone Foundation, Crown Foundation, etc
  - Generation of off season use revenue to further support the cost of operating Owasippe

What We Want

- We are not ignorant of the financial issues and their magnitude. The most active volunteers have been dealing with this for over 20 years.
- We want a chance to prove we can provide the financial backing. If, after a reasonable period, we are unable to do that then we must face the inevitable.
- We don't believe that all of these options have been explored enough to cast off our existing resource.

Thank you for your time